

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

OFFICE OF MARINE SAFETY

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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SELENDANG AYU

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INTERVIEW OF CAPTAIN FARRELL :

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ROB JONES, NTSB

SEAN MCPHILAMY, USGC

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. JONES: Okay, as I said before, my name is Rob Jones and with me today as a party to the investigation is Coast Guard Senior Chief, Sean McPhilamy and what I would like to do, Captain, is just start off asking a few background questions and then go into, you know, your memory of the events and I am going to try to let you go as straight line as possible with as much as information as you can give us and try not to jump in and save that for later on in the interview and after I am done, then I will turn it over to Sean and after he asks a few questions, you know, I will follow back up with anything I might have or he might have. Okay and then at the end we usually like to get a response from you as to, you know, your take on the event and maybe what could be done to prevent something like this from happening in the future, since you were there on scene and have a better reference of what happened than I would. So if we could start, Captain, just little background on yourself, how long have you worked with Foss?

CAPTAIN FARRELL: I have been with Foss since 1989.

MR. JONES: And on the same vessel or different tugboats?

CAPTAIN FARRELL: No I have been in Foss's marine transportation division and I have run have most of their marine transportation division vessels.

1 MR. JONES: Okay what kind of license do you hold
2 sir?

3 CAPTAIN FARRELL: I have 1600 ton Masters-Ocean.

4 MR. JONES: Any schooling for that or
5 (Indiscernible)?

6 CAPTAIN FARRELL: (Indiscernible)

7 MR. JONES: Okay, and prior to the event sir, could
8 you give us little description, maybe back up a couple of
9 days and it does not have to be hour-by-hour, but a short
10 description of the work you were tasked with, whether you
11 were at the dock or towing or you know about two, three days,
12 72 hours prior to actually being notified of, you know, going
13 out to help the Selendang.

14 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes, I will give you that.

15 MR. JONES: Yep.

16 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Okay, we were in Adiak with cargo
17 barge, cargo on December 3 or thereabouts. We departed Adiak
18 en route for Dutch Harbor, arrived at Dutch Harbor, on
19 December 6 late afternoon--

20 MR. JONES: Okay , here we are go. Just because I
21 haven't heard Sean for while, Sean?

22 MR. MCPHILAMY: Yes I am still there.

23 MR. JONES: Okay great. If we could pick it back
24 up where you were then.

25 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Okay about 0530 we completed our

1 work at the Coast Guard Dock in Dutch Harbor and began a
2 shift over to APL Dock. At 0710 we were all fast at the APL
3 Dock in Dutch Harbor and at 0740 was when we first heard
4 about this vessel in distress.

5 MR. JONES: Okay. And had while, (Indiscernible)
6 you got reports in there, how did you hear about that?

7 CAPTAIN FARRELL: That was originally passed along
8 to me by Jeff Rogers with Samson Tug and Barge, they are
9 actually the operators of the barge that we were towing.

10 MR. JONES: Okay, so was that just a cursory call
11 over the VHF or something or--?

12 CAPTAIN FARRELL: No, I saw him in person, he was
13 actually on the barge and they were beginning to work the
14 barge at that time.

15 MR. JONES: Okay, so this was just of interest, you
16 hadn't been formally asked to go on assist or anything?

17 CAPTAIN FARRELL: No, he had received a call from
18 the Coast Guard in Dutch Harbor from Dutch Harbor, I believe,
19 and they were simply trying to see what vessels were
20 available and in the area at that time.

21 MR. JONES: Okay, all right. If could continue,
22 that would be great.

23 CAPTAIN FARRELL: What part do you want me to
24 continue with? From now on this begins to get into the
25 Selendang Ayu.

1 MR. JONES: Okay well, before you left, what we
2 also look at to is everybody's work patterns, sleep habits,
3 something like that. What kind of hours were you keeping for
4 this two or three days before the actual incident?

5 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Just normal watch hours.

6 MR. JONES: Can you estimate how much sleep per day
7 you were getting prior to leaving Dutch Harbor?

8 CAPTAIN FARRELL: At least eight hours.

9 MR. JONES: Okay. And what are your normal watch
10 hours on the vessel?

11 CAPTAIN FARRELL: 8:00 to 12:00.

12 MR. JONES: Okay, both four hours on, eight hours
13 off?

14 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes.

15 MR. JONES: Okay. How much of a crew do you keep
16 on there, Captain?

17 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Six.

18 MR. JONES: Six?

19 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes.

20 MR. JONES: How many still in the in the wheelhouse
21 or how many guys or deck-hands do you have or mates that
22 share the wheelhouse duties with you?

23 CAPTAIN FARRELL: I have two mates. I have two
24 Sailors and the Chief Engineer.

25 MR. JONES: Okay, all right well let's just go from

1 Dutch Harbor then. When were you officially notified and by
2 whom to depart and head out to assist?

3 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Well, shortly after being
4 notified by Jeff Rogers, I put in a call to Captain Pearson
5 at our office in Seattle and subsequently we had talked back
6 and forth about the situation and he gathered a lot more of
7 the details from your office in Anchorage as well as in Dutch
8 Harbor I am sure and at 0930 we actually received orders from
9 our office to proceed to the vessel and that was the
10 Selendang Ayu. At the time we thought she was a 600 foot
11 loaded grain ship.

12 MR. JONES: Okay.

13 CAPTAIN FARRELL: At that point, I began making
14 preparations for making this voyage and we ended up, decided
15 on a plan of action and what course we would actually follow
16 at 1108 we were underway for an intercept point with the
17 Selendang Ayu and at that time we had received reports of her
18 original position that we were given and that she was
19 drifting at a rate of 3.5 knots to the east-southeast or
20 southeast in that general direction. We rounded Cape
21 Cheerful at 1315. Weather was Northwest 45 to 55 with a
22 northwest sea and swell running 20 to 25 feet. By 1530, we
23 had established contact with the Selendang Ayu, their
24 position at that time was given as 54 degrees North, 168.00
25 degrees West and the captain informed me that he had cleared

1 Bogoslof Island by 2 miles and said they were drifting to the
2 east at 3.7 knots at that time.

3 MR. JONES: Okay.

4 CAPTAIN FARRELL: By 1737 we had the Selendang Ayu
5 in sight and at 1740 I had called the crew out on deck. I
6 called the crew we did not actually get out on the deck. At
7 that time I spoke with the Captain and asked him concerning
8 chafing gear on the line that we were going to send up if he
9 could put any on and he indicated that he really, he didn't
10 have any chafing gear, he could put on and you know he would
11 grease the (Indiscernible) and we intended on running this
12 line through. So I had my crew at chafing gear to the
13 towline where we thought it was going to go through and again
14 I had asked the captain how far it would be from the
15 attachment point to the (Indiscernible). He told me five
16 meters. So at time I had the crew with chafing gear on from
17 about 10 feet behind the eye to about 18 feet and that
18 chafing gear consisted of bows wrapped around the line and
19 then area rugs, we then laid over the top of the fire hose.
20 I again had been in back with Captain Pearson here at Foss
21 and we discussed the situation. At 1825 I was on Selendang
22 Ayu and started making observations at that time on just how
23 the ship was laying and what the water conditions were, what
24 I thought our best course of action would be and we already
25 had a general plan of exactly how we were going to do

1 everything, consisted of basically sending up the emergency
2 towline.

3 We had originally assumed that we would be using
4 our line gun to pass a messenger line over to the ship, but
5 on further evaluation of the situation, I found that I could
6 get fairly close to the ship and as long as I was on her lee
7 side, I could work and have a degree of safety on the deck as
8 it was really was going to wash or anything at that point.
9 When I came out, up from underneath the bow of the ship and
10 held my stern off to her bow then we started rolling around
11 taking some seas but at that point my crew would be up on the
12 boat deck and working the emergency towline from there. We,
13 by 1915, had made several passes around the ship and they had
14 decided that I could hold the position in front of the ship
15 long enough so that purpose going to work okay for us and I
16 also decided that probably the best way to get this line up
17 would be to pass closer to the bow of the ship and have the
18 ship crew throw a heaving line down to us. This would
19 eliminate probably four or five minutes of taking up
20 messenger line and in my opinion, it was probably the safest,
21 the quickest way to get this line up.

22 We really did not want to dawdle too much in front
23 of the ship because we just wanted to get the, get the
24 towline up as quick as possible. At 1918 I was again in
25 contact with the Captain and told them exactly what I

1 intended to do and by 1930 they were sending their crew up to
2 the bow of the ship to take this towline from us. There was
3 a certain while to get up there as their decks were awash.
4 The ship was rolling 25 to 35 degrees. The weather remained
5 the same northwest 45 to 55 with a 20 to 25 foot sea rolling.
6 The Selendang Ayu crew got to the bow and by 1940 they were
7 in position. We made our first pass at 1945. We had a
8 failed attempt getting a heaving line across from the ship to
9 our deck and so we made a second pass. At 1954 we got a
10 heaving line from the ship, they threw it down and came on
11 our decks, we moored that line into our one-inch polyline
12 that was our last messenger line that would be going directly
13 to the emergency towline that we had. It had took them a few
14 minutes to start hauling in their heaving line.

15 It was -- they were kind of looking at us like they
16 did not plan on what to do. So by 1959 they started hauling
17 the messenger line, that heaving line, and eventually got to
18 the messenger line and by 2004 we had the emergency towline
19 secured on the ship, and at 2006 we started streaming our
20 two-inch tow wire that the emergency towline was married
21 into. At 2022 I had seven, eight layers of tow wire out,
22 that would be approximately 0.35 miles of tow wire, roughly
23 1900 feet. At 2027 we started taking a strain on the towline
24 and at 2037 I was again in contact with Doug Pearson. We
25 brought the engine turns up from about 475 to 550 rpms and

1 that was about the most I could pull on this line with any
2 degree of safety and not to be in danger of parting the line
3 because I simply over-stressed pulling too hard on it.

4 Once we were up the speed we continued to pull on
5 the line, snow and ice walls continued to blow through the
6 area. At 2140 the wind was still 45 to 55, seas 20 to 25 and
7 continuing snow and ice squalls, which had been periodically
8 going through the entire time that we were working out at the
9 ship. I was not able to turn the ship's head. I was
10 working, trying to keep my heading (Indiscernible) 345
11 degrees through. The ship's head was somewhere in the 025
12 degrees range and I was really unable affect that much. At
13 times it would go to say, maybe 33-34 degrees I believe and
14 sometimes it would come down to about 20 degrees, but for
15 some part it hung right in at about 0 -5 degrees through.

16 At 2245 there was some issues with my tug in
17 regards to the way I was towing. I had to drop my tow pins
18 and let the wire go more off of my quarter sections, so I
19 could get back in front of the ship, to keep myself from
20 getting (Indiscernible) and running the possibility of
21 tripping the tug. I was back in front of the ship at 2030
22 and continued working on it. At 0135 or so I freshened up my
23 tow wire little bit and by that I mean I just let out another
24 three or four feet of wire in order to change in any chafing
25 spots that may be occurring in my tow wire. At 0140 I was

1 still in the position of not being able to pull the ship's
2 head around. At that time, our course over the ground was
3 actually 109 degrees through. Our speed was 1.5 knots over
4 the bottom. On that heading it put us about 18.5 miles from
5 shore water off (Indiscernible) point and it looked to me
6 like we would be there in about 12 hours and 20 minutes from
7 that time. All these are, by the way, Alaska standard time.

8 MR. JONES: Okay, thanks.

9 CAPTAIN FARRELL: That would be local time.

10 MR. JONES: okay.

11 CAPTAIN FARRELL: At 0700 we continued towing on.
12 The ship's conditions remained the same. Still no change in
13 the ship's heading. We had slowed down her original rate of
14 drift from say 3.5 or 3.7 down to 1.5 and it, yeah that is
15 where we were at 0700 and the wind was still 45 to 55. The
16 seas were probably coming between 25 plus at that point, but
17 for me personally once you are in those size seas in a
18 relatively small vessel its kind of hard to estimate how much
19 bigger they are getting, because you are looking up at
20 everything, anyway. So once they gets over the 25 almost
21 they, just start to imagine how much bigger they are getting
22 to get. At 0732 the towline and ...

23 MR. JONES: I am sorry Captain, you broke up there
24 was that 0732 towline parted?

25 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes at 0732 the towline parted.

1 I notified the ship and I also notified the U S. CG vessel
2 Alex Haley and I might add that I had been in contact with
3 the Alex Haley since about 1500 in the afternoon. I am not
4 sure what time they arrived on station, but they were in the
5 vicinity when I arrived and I did have periodic contact with
6 them as well as keeping them informed of my actions and where
7 I was at this whole time. So being contacted by Captain Ron
8 Morris out of Anchorage at one point by phone in the
9 afternoon of December 7, and had given him the preliminary
10 run-down of what we expected and how we were going to try and
11 do what we ended up doing out there.

12 So at 0732, as I said, the towline parted. At 0745
13 I started bringing the tow wire in and at 0810 I contacted
14 the cutter Alex Haley and let them know where we were with
15 regards to the towline recovery. They told me at that time
16 they were making preparations for evacuating nonessential
17 personnel from the ship and they would like to see this done
18 between 0900 and 1100 hours. At 0853 the emergency towline
19 was back onboard, and I asked the Captain how much was left
20 onboard his vessel and he said about three meters which means
21 that it must have broken at the bull nose although I can't --
22 I am not exactly sure of that but that would sound about
23 right to me.

24 At 0906 I let the Alex Haley know we had the
25 towline back aboard. They asked and let us know that there

1 might me a possibility of us needing to assist in the
2 recovery of seamen and I of course said that would be fine.
3 We were available and certainly help in any way we can. At
4 1918 actually started splicing (Indiscernible) back in our
5 emergency towline to see if we could put it back up. At that
6 time I had to head into the seas in order to get this
7 splicing project done. The weather was such that I could not
8 have anybody out on deck or even on the boat decks trying to
9 splice this line because, one, it was extremely cold and two,
10 it was just rough out there. I just wouldn't want my men
11 exposed to that kind of weather and trying to do that kind of
12 work.

13 So they were working in the (Indiscernible) and I
14 needed to head into the seas to keep the water from coming
15 into my (Indiscernible) which they had cracked enough to get,
16 to allow that line fit into the (Indiscernible) where the men
17 could work on it. At 1025 the Alex Haley called and asked us
18 for an evaluation of the situation. The weather seemed to be
19 picking up a little bit to me with winds gusting around the
20 65 mark every once in a while. The seas were getting very
21 steep and although I am logging them at 20 to 25 foot I
22 actually would be there probably closer to the 30 may be 33
23 foot range at that time. I told the Alex Haley we were
24 working on this, trying to get another eye in the line and
25 when we got that done let them know and we would get that

1 (Indiscernible) line for redeployment again.

2 Now this is a long process, trying to put an eye
3 splice into an extremely wet and used line. This was a 12
4 part line, take some time to get this accomplished. I was
5 also in contact with the Captain on the Selendang Ayu in the
6 10-25 range and he was asking me about what kind of bottom
7 was coming up on the shore where they were drifting into at
8 this point. I informed him that it looked to be black sand
9 and green mud. He asked me if I thought it was good holding
10 area and I told him I really did not know. I can just tell
11 you this is what is on the chart, so black sand and green mud
12 and it is good if the water was somewhere around 40 fathoms,
13 35 in that general depth.

14 At 1115 the Selendang Ayu dropped her port anchor
15 and shots on deck and it was actually beginning to hold and
16 the head was turning up into the sea. At 1211 the Selendang
17 Ayu began dragging anchor and she was going to start
18 deploying her starboard anchor but by 1300 she had reported,
19 the Captain reported that he did not want to drop the
20 starboard anchor at that time for fear of fouling it with the
21 port anchor and at that time she was about a quarter miles
22 from the beach. At 1405 she had come much closer to the
23 beach and grounding was imminent and at that point the
24 Captain decided he would deploy his starboard anchor as he
25 put it "better to have two anchors down than one if you are

1 going aground", and so he did at that time deploy that
2 anchor. At 1430 the first (Indiscernible) evacuation and at
3 that time they were going to take the first 18 personnel off
4 the ship. They wanted to get the non-essential personnel
5 off. At 1450 we completed the eye splice on the emergency
6 towline. At 1510 we began staging the towline for
7 redeployment and by that time after taking a careful look at
8 the weather, the condition of the ship, the position of the
9 ship, considering the fact he now had 2 anchors out and was
10 not at point, I determined it was just entirely too
11 dangerous, too rough for me to attempt to put another line up
12 on it. Yeah, the weather was just too rough for me to risk
13 putting men out on deck and or risking my vessel at that
14 time.

15 By 1600, there were eight persons left onboard the
16 ship and the Coast Guard was asking the master if they could
17 maybe start, if they could just get the rest of those,
18 everybody else off the ship at that time and the thinking was
19 that if the ship was still there in the morning, they would
20 fly the crew back and they could work on it then. At that
21 time, the captain said that he really needed the essential
22 men on aboard and that the Chief Engineer was going to try
23 and revive the engine. At that point he was about 0.88 miles
24 off of the beach by my radar and at 1700 the weather was
25 northwest 45-55 with higher gust was frequent. It was quite

1 calm and the sea gusting at 60 to 70. Now the seas were
2 steady at 25 feet with a lot higher swells and a lot steeper
3 swells coming in at that time.

4 The Coast Guard at 1600 when they wanted to
5 actually get the rest of the guys off the vessel had said
6 that their heel that they had in area would have to go back
7 to Dutch Harbor for refueling and that once that happened it
8 would take about an hour to get anybody back out to the ship.
9 There was a helicopter onboard the Alex Haley and that would
10 take some time to deploy and of course the larger helicopter
11 would be back in Dutch Harbor. At 1715 the Captain of the
12 Selendang Ayu reported that she had struck something and was
13 requesting immediate evacuation and that she was taking on
14 water in one of the cargo holes.

15 Both helos, the helo from the Alex Haley had gone
16 off the deck and was in the air and at that time the large
17 helo from Dutch Harbor was on station and that as I learned
18 was a, called Jayhawk. At 1812 the big helo started the
19 evacuation of the ship, our position was just off the
20 starboard bow and, the helo was fairly low on the hatch No 1
21 on the ship and that's where they were loading crew.

22 At 1817 a huge wave, had to have been 35 foot
23 anyway, crashed into the bow of the Selendang Ayu and sent a
24 wall of water and spray completely over the ship and engulfed
25 the rescue helicopter. At that point, she tried to lift off

1 the deck, got about as, just a little bit higher than the
2 cranes on deck and then crashed into the sea. We had turned
3 at that point and headed back towards the area immediately
4 after that second helo which was from the Alex Haley asked us
5 if we would please stand out of the immediate area as she was
6 going to conduct search and rescues and asked if we would
7 take surveyors onboard to our tug (Indiscernible) of course
8 we will. At some point shortly thereafter second rescue helo
9 left the area. While I was watching her in her search
10 pattern, I could see her searchlight in the water but I could
11 not see any activity, that helicopter then flew off.

12 At about 1825 or 1830, I heard a call from a rescue
13 swimmer and he was calling the Alex Haley. At that time I
14 found that Rescue Swimmer and the Captain of the Selendang
15 Ayu were still onboard the ship and they were up on the bow
16 section. The Alex Haley had asked us if there was anything
17 we could do about it, could we somehow effect a rescue and I
18 looked at it again and there was just no way for us to get in
19 there and it would seem to me at that point that they were
20 better off where they were and taking any other option that I
21 could see at that time.

22 By 1920 the Rescue Swimmer called the Alex Haley
23 again and reported that the captain told him that the ship
24 had just broken her back. At 2010 the Rescue Swimmer called
25 in and said that the ship had broken in two and that he and

1 the Captain were on the forward section of the ship near the
2 (Indiscernible). At that time we were off the starboard bow
3 of the ship just waiting to see what was going to turn,
4 excepting the rescue helicopter to come back shortly. By
5 2100 the rescue helicopter had returned, picked up Petty
6 Officer Bean, the Rescue Swimmer and the Captain off the bow
7 of the ship.

8 At 2215, the Sidney Foss, we entered
9 (Indiscernible) to spend the night more or less out of the
10 weather and just jogging in the area. On December 9 at 0745
11 we headed out of (Indiscernible) Bay for the Selendang Ayu
12 which was in the vicinity of (Indiscernible) Bay and Spray
13 Cape. Right there at about 0930 it was still dark and about
14 10:15 I did our evaluation of the ship as I could see that it
15 was clearly broken in two pieces with the bow section
16 floating free and also high out of the water. The stern
17 section of the ship at that time, her rails were awash. She
18 was, kind of working (Indiscernible) looked like she was kind
19 of pivoting in the seas.

20 I called my office and passed on my assessment of
21 what I could see. I also did not see at that time any signs
22 of life, did not see anybody on the beach, did not see
23 anything or any floats in the water as close as I could get
24 in. The bow of the ship by the time she had gone solidly
25 aground was about 0.55 miles off of the beach and while she

1 had reached that point it was, no, I no longer considered it
2 safe for me to get too close to the ship as just uncharted
3 rocks and pinnacles out there. I just don't want to put my
4 ship, my vessel or my crew in that kind of danger. At about
5 1110, there was a helo over flight of the ship and at 1115, a
6 C-130 over flight, at 1120 we were released from the area.
7 We steamed to (Indiscernible) bay where we secured our
8 emergency towline and then headed back for Dutch Harbor. At
9 2345 on 9 December 2004 we were back alongside of our barge
10 Fairweather at the APL Dock, that's it.

11 MR. JONES: Okay I appreciate your time. It's
12 quite a bonus for us to have someone that keeps such good
13 records. Just going back to what you just said when you were
14 released. Who released you from the scene?

15 CAPTAIN FARRELL: : I was in contact with Captain
16 Doug Pearson.

17 MR. JONES: Okay. So your management, your owners?

18 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes.

19 MR. JONES: Okay. Did you have any communication
20 the next morning with the Haley as far as what your duty
21 still could be or anything like that?

22 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes I did, yes I did. At 1040 I
23 passed on weather info and general conditions to the Alex
24 Haley and told them at that time we would be standing by in
25 the area until we received further orders.

1 MR. JONES: Okay, and if you are ready kind of just
2 go back to a couple of question that I have for those are
3 great brief on your participation there. When you were
4 describing the wave, the 35-foot wave approximately, that
5 came up and hit the bow then sent the spray of water into the
6 air that eventually downed the chopper. Do you have any idea
7 the heading of the Selendang at that time?

8 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes. Yes I do. I need to think
9 about that you know...

10 MR. JONES: Okay, take your time.

11 CAPTAIN FARRELL: I believe our general heading at
12 that time was say north, north-west.

13 MR. JONES: Okay.

14 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Roughly, may be what 345, 350
15 degrees through.

16 MR. JONES: Okay. So could we say, and don't let
17 me put words in your mouth by any means. When you were
18 originally telling me you couldn't get her head around and
19 she was, can I assume she was lying in her broadside to the
20 seas that were coming out of the northwest and you said her
21 heading was anywhere from 020 to 35 or 40, when you had the
22 towline on her and were trying to get her around?

23 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes. Are you asking me if she
24 was lying on the trough, the answer is yes. It was lying in
25 the trough.

1 MR. JONES: Okay then somewhere between when the
2 tow, after the towline parted and upon getting closer or up
3 to the beach, the heading kind of came around to the north
4 and then off to the north-west?

5 CAPTAIN FARRELL: No, the heading came around
6 because she had her anchors down.

7 MR. JONES: Okay.

8 CAPTAIN FARRELL: It was actually holding up into
9 the sea at that point.

10 MR. JONES: Okay. I was just trying to get, do you
11 have she was lying when that wave hit her?

12 CAPTAIN FARRELL: She was pretty much well into the
13 seas.

14 MR. JONES: Okay. If you could just go back a
15 little further to once the line parted and you were working
16 on getting another eye in the end. How were the seas at that
17 point or shortly after like you recovered the line? Could
18 you have got the line up at that time?

19 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Negative.

20 MR. JONES: Okay. You are the experts here,
21 gentleman, with regards to towing. One of the things I was
22 thinking of is, you know, could we have just got a bitter end
23 up there and they have taken that around bitts?

24 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Actually we had recovered the
25 towline. I do not believe that my option, the option was not

1 there. The seas were steeper at that point, higher, my decks
2 were awash and at that point I could not risk attempting to
3 get a crew out.

4 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yeah that is your call and that's
5 understandable. Going back to the time that you were, you
6 had the towline on her and you said, I think your approximate
7 drift was little south of east and you slowed the overall
8 drift down at about a knot and a half, was there any
9 discussions with you and the Alex Haley that you know even
10 though you had the towline on, you were trying to make
11 headway, you couldn't get her head turned around and you were
12 still, you know setting towards basically the island of
13 Unalaska. Was anything else discussed as to what could have
14 been done or possible changes just to, just to address the
15 drift?

16 CAPTAIN FARRELL: I was in contact with the Alex
17 Haley and kept them abreast of our situation the entire, in
18 regard, what else could we do there just didn't seem to be
19 too many options. At one point I had the ship swing her
20 rudder for me, I was hoping that maybe by -- I could, maybe
21 by swinging her rudder, it would just give me a little more
22 drag on the stern and I would be able to pull the head up
23 around. That did not work. Then I later on had tried
24 staying directly in front of the ship and maybe seeing if we
25 could get her to go a little faster so she could actually

1 have some water running by the rudder. We tried that
2 maneuver again. It made no difference whatsoever with the
3 exception that at one point after having attempted that,
4 that's when it dipped down to probably, its most easterly
5 position which was somewhere around 35 degrees, so we swung
6 the rudder back amidships and they had come back around to
7 the, I will say 0280 to 25 that general vicinity degrees
8 through.

9 MR. JONES: Okay.

10 CAPTAIN FARRELL: There just wasn't much of an
11 option. At one point the, around 0-500 I believe the tug
12 James Dunlap arrived on scene and I asked them if, what they
13 had and what their capabilities were and they informed me
14 that they have two pieces of blue steel line, 200 foot in
15 length each and they thought may they could shackle those two
16 lines together and do something with them. At that time I
17 had asked him if I thought they could get a line up on either
18 the stern of the ship or may be on the quarter section of the
19 ship and try and pull the, pull the stern around while I was
20 working on the bow and we could get this thing turned into
21 the sea and they said it was too dark and too rough to do
22 anything at that time and that was somewhere around 0500 and
23 they take a look at the daylight. We had lost the tow.

24 MR. JONES: You had initiated that idea of the
25 Dunlap going around the stern and trying to pull the stern

1 around to get the head up?

2 CAPTAIN FARRELL: That was something that the
3 Dunlap vessel and myself had talked about.

4 MR. JONES: Okay. Did you hear any communication
5 between the Dunlap and Selendang Ayu?

6 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes I believe they were in
7 contact.

8 MR. JONES: Okay.

9 CAPTAIN FARRELL: I can't say anymore than that.

10 MR. JONES: Yeah that's file. At the time you had
11 them under tow, were you getting much sleep at that point?

12 CAPTAIN FARRELL: No, I was not.

13 MR. JONES: I couldn't see really how anybody would
14 with 25 foot seas, to tell you the truth. Were you taking a
15 break at least with, was the mate at the helm sometimes and,
16 you know, just curious as to were you in the bridge the whole
17 time?

18 CAPTAIN FARRELL: I was on the bridge the whole
19 time, yes. My mates were up there. My mates did stand her
20 watch.

21 MR. JONES: Believe me, I am just trying to get the
22 picture of -- I am sure it was quite a time spent on the
23 bridge of your vessel especially you are looking at the seas
24 coming at you. What was your impression, you know, with you
25 talking with the Captain of the Selendang Ayu? Can you give

1 me your impression of your conversations with him, just with
2 regards to, you know, trying to deal with the situation?

3 CAPTAIN FARRELL: He seemed calm and in control and
4 like he seemed calm and in control. He was not, he seemed
5 calm and in control.

6 MR. JONES: Okay well. I think you have -- that
7 you have clarified that, but I do appreciate, you know, it's
8 hard to, I have met him and talked with him and interviewed
9 him and it's good to hear someone else's point of view with
10 regards to the incident, you know, who was directly involved
11 with them. Just to clarify, the wire that you used you said
12 it was a 2 inch wire and you had, I guess may be and again
13 this doesn't to be absolute but you said about 1900 feet you
14 had out?

15 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes, rough yes.

16 MR. JONES: Yeah, and what's the breaking strength
17 of that?

18 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Sure you understand the wire
19 didn't break.

20 MR. JONES: No, no, I know I was just curious, I
21 was curious about the breaking strength of the wire also.

22 CAPTAIN FARRELL: I don't have in front of me, I
23 can get that for you though.

24 MR. JONES: Yeah that's just again, that's just the
25 factual information about the wire you used and same with the

1 (Indiscernible) the size and the breaking strength.

2 CAPTAIN PEARSON: Yeah I can get that, this Doug
3 Pearson, I can get that back to you.

4 MR. JONES: Okay, thanks Captain Pearson. Well
5 that's all I have right now. I would like to turn it over to
6 Mr. McPhilamy and I will just come back with any questions I
7 have after he is done. Thanks again, Captain, it's been very
8 informative so far.

9 MR. MCPHILAMY: Good morning, Captain, this is
10 again Senior Chief Mr. McPhilamy and I thank you very much
11 for very valuable interview. I do have a couple of follow-on
12 questions if you spare with me. I am fairly slow rider and I
13 was just finishing up some notes there. I am guessing that
14 you have relayed a lot of this information from notations and
15 logs that you maintained during, rather than straight away
16 from memory, is that correct sir?

17 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes that is correct.

18 MR. MCPHILAMY: And the Haley, during the event the
19 Alex Haley, I believe made an attempt after the towline
20 separated on the 8th, the Haley made an attempt to tow. Are
21 you aware of that sir?

22 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yeah.

23 MR. MCPHILAMY: Could you relate your observations
24 about that incident?

25 CAPTAIN FARRELL: You will have to clarify that. I

1 am not quite sure what you are asking me.

2 MR. MCPHILAMY: Oh, I am sorry. I apologize. At
3 some point, and I don't know from your statement if you
4 observed it or not but I believe that Haley did try to make a
5 tow and at that point I am wondering if you were in the area
6 or if you were still working into the seas as I think you
7 believe you said it that so that your towline could be
8 spliced for a new eye, I am not sure what your occupation at
9 that point was, but if you happened to either hear by radio
10 communications or see by your nature of where you were
11 visually that attempt I am interested in. How you saw them
12 approach, what you heard, your observation, sir?

13 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes I was in the area at that
14 time we were at that point still splicing the line into our
15 emergency towline and I actually seen him make
16 (Indiscernible) I did see him laying broadside to the seas
17 after he had reported that he had lost steering while making
18 this attempt. Said that their messenger line had parted and
19 after that the Alex Haley pulled away from the Selendang Ayu
20 and maintained a pretty good distance off shore at that
21 point.

22 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you, sir. And then one more
23 questions as to communication. I know that you had radio
24 communications with the master of the Selendang Ayu at any
25 point were you aware of communications between, as an example

1 during the towline breaking were you in contact directly with
2 their bow or with this by visual and how did you communicate
3 with personnel on the bow as they were making that connection
4 between their heaving line and their hauling in your
5 messenger and such?

6 CAPTAIN FARRELL: At the time I had my Chief Mate
7 had a radio and he was in contact with somebody on the bow of
8 the Selendang Ayu but I would assume that he was in contact
9 with the Chief Mate on the Selendang Ayu as we were making
10 this tow up. Basically what we did was watch the messenger
11 line went up. I went in front of the bow of the Selendang
12 Ayu and held off it about 75 feet and then as the line was
13 going up slowly worked away as the line went up rather than
14 closing on the bow of the ship. 75 feet is not hell of lot
15 of distance when you are on those kind of seas.

16 MR. MCPHILAMY: No sir, not with those seas, I
17 appreciate that, more than you know. Thank you very much for
18 that information, I just was attempting to clarify the
19 communications and I appreciate what you tell me.

20 CAPTAIN FARRELL: And I would also like to add that
21 at one point just so you know the conditions that when the
22 Alex Haley was we were both running head to seas fairly close
23 to the Selendang Ayu when she was in her last anchored
24 position for holding and she was so severely that I was, I
25 could actually, I actually (Indiscernible) her wheels and

1 rudders come out of the water. Just so you know what size
2 that ship was, that's how steep the seas were.

3 MR. MCPHILAMY: Um-hum, she was pitching that
4 badly?

5 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Yes.

6 MR. MCPHILAMY: And I am done, thank you very much.

7 MR. JONES: Okay Sean, thank you and gentlemen.
8 Guess it's back to me. This is Mr. Jones again. With
9 regards to a tow of this size, I give this again just for my
10 own clarification. If it wasn't an emergency situation like
11 this, would you need more tugs for, you know like a 700 foot
12 vessel of her deadweight and even Mr. Pearson, you can answer
13 this if you know, I know Foss does some ocean towing,
14 actually, don't even be hypothetical about this I just was
15 wondering maybe if your towing parameters for a vessel the
16 size, if you were just contracted to do an open ocean tow
17 like this what you would normally rig for something like
18 this? And if you can't answer now, that's fine, if I can get
19 maybe just some written information on that, that would be
20 great.

21 CAPTAIN FARRELL: And if you are directing that
22 question to me I do not have an answer for you as regard to
23 horsepower, lines all that. I will refer you to Captain
24 Pearson on that question and he will be able to answer that
25 better than I.

1 MR. JONES: Okay, thanks, Captain Farrell. Captain
2 Pearson, do you answer for that or it's just something that
3 you know we just want to look at later on?

4 CAPTAIN PEARSON: I would say we have towed
5 everything from aircraft carriers like the Midway and the
6 Constellation to numerous ships all the time. That's our
7 line of work. Do we send out a 3000 horse tug to do that job
8 for a 740 foot loaded (Indiscernible). No, that's not
9 consistent in our, every time we (Indiscernible) ship job we
10 first go through the deadweight of the ship and then
11 (Indiscernible) we got, like on a rescue tug, like
12 (Indiscernible) we set that gear up for what that job
13 specifically is and when we go out and do like a carrier tow
14 onboard the ship we go back through (Indiscernible) watch for
15 everything and then figure out what it takes to that. With
16 that size of ship we would be up around our lower class about
17 8200 horse, 150 foot tug with a 2-1/2 inch tow wire and about
18 5000 feet of tow wire.

19 MR. JONES: Okay.

20 CAPTAIN PEARSON: You know each one of them is kind
21 of new job so every one of them you have to look
22 (Indiscernible) completely them and know the ship and know
23 it. On high seas rescue like that to get a line onboard is
24 primarily number one and got power where they can pull that
25 line up, attach a shackle or get a wire on her, well that's

1 everything you want to do and we have done it numerous times
2 but not in weather like that.

3 MR. JONES: Right.

4 CAPTAIN PEARSON: So the long and short of it is, I
5 guess, every one of them is different but I can send you back
6 like a tow plan like we do on all the works that was like
7 when we do tows for the Navy or anybody else.

8 MR. JONES: Yeah, that's fine. Maybe we can
9 address that a little later, I was just looking through my
10 notes here, just I don't want to hold up Captain Farrell any
11 longer than I have to and I am just trying to see if I have
12 covered what I need to cover.

13 CAPTAIN PEARSON: Also on the breaking strength of
14 that tow wire and of the emergency tow line, I will get that
15 information to Frank and then he can forward that on to you
16 but (Indiscernible).

17 MR. JONES: Okay, that would be great, and again
18 that just goes to the report writing with regards to the
19 technical event of you know even just so, like I asked Mr.
20 (Indiscernible) just the parameters of the tug itself, the
21 horsepower, the size and again it just blends itself to the
22 factual part of the report. Well think, Captain Farrell,
23 that's all I have right now. Sean, do you have anything
24 else?

25 MR. MCPHILAMY: No but I do appreciate your

1 information this morning, Captain.

2 CAPTAIN FARRELL: Okay, thank you very much.

3 MR. JONES: Okay gentlemen, I appreciate it. Sean,
4 if you want to cut out, go ahead and...

5 MR. MCPHILAMY: Well thank you very much gentlemen,
6 have a very good day.

7 MR. JONES: Okay.

8 MR. MCPHILAMY: Bye-bye.

9 MR. JONES: And, I still have Captain Pearson and
10 Frank and Captain Farrell on the line.

11 CAPTAIN PEARSON: We are still on the, yeah.

12 MR. JONES: Yeah, what I will do, gentlemen, is let
13 me pick up the phone here so I am not yelling, my neighbor is
14 getting pissed off with me. I have concluded the interview.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

DEPOSITION SERVICES, INC., hereby certifies that the attached pages represent an accurate transcript of the electronic sound recording of the proceedings of the National Transportation Safety Board Interview regarding the grounding of the Selendang Ayu on December 9, 2004.

INTERVIEW OF CAPTAIN FARRELL

Susan S., Transcriber